under 5 U.S.C. 552b(c), (4) and (6) of the Government in the Sunshine Act.

Dated: May 1, 2001.

Susanne Bolton,

Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. 01–11292 Filed 5–3–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7555–01–M

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Proposal Review; Notice of Meetings

In accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92–463, as amended), the National Science Foundation (NSF) announces its intent to hold proposal review meetings throughout the year. The purpose of these meetings is to provide advice and recommendations concerning proposals submitted to the NSF for financial support. The agenda for each of these meetings is to review and evaluate proposals as part of the selection process for awards. The majority of these meetings will take place at NSF, 4201 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, Virginia 22230.

All of these meetings will be closed to the public. The proposals being reviewed include information of a proprietary or confidential nature, including technical information; financial data, such as salaries; and personal information concerning individuals associated with the proposals. These matters are exempt under 5 U.S.C. 552b(c), (4) and (6) of the Government in the Sunshine Act. NSF will continue to review the agenda and merits of each meeting for overall compliance of the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

These closed proposal review meetings will no longer be announced on an individual basis in the **Federal Register**. NSF intends to publish a notice similar to this on a quarterly basis. For an advance listing of the closed proposal review meetings that include the names of the proposal review panel and the time, date, place, and any information on changes, corrections, or cancellations, please visit the NSF web-site: *www.nsf.gov/home/pubinfo/advisory.htm.* This information may also be requested by telephoning 703/292–8182.

Dated: May 1, 2001.

Susanne Bolton,

Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. 01–11287 Filed 5–3–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7555–01–M

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[50–301]

Nuclear Management Company, LLC Duane Arnold Energy Center; Exemption

1.0 Background

Nuclear Management Company, LLC (NMC, the licensee) is the holder of Facility Operating License No. DPR–49 which authorizes operation of the Duane Arnold Energy Center (DAEC). The license provides, among other things, that the facility is subject to all rules, regulations, and orders of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) now or hereafter in effect.

The facility consists of a boiling water reactor located on NMC's DAEC site, which is located in Linn County, Iowa.

2.0 Purpose

Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR) part 50, Appendix G requires that pressure-temperature (P–T) limits be established for reactor pressure vessels (RPVs) during normal operating and hydrostatic or leak rate testing conditions. Specifically, 10 CFR part 50, appendix G states that, "The appropriate requirements on both the pressure-temperature limits and the minimum permissible temperature must be met for all conditions." Appendix G of 10 CFR part 50 specifies that the P–T limits must meet the safety margin requirements specified in the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code (Code), Section XI, Appendix G.

To address provisions of the proposed amendments to the technical specification (TS) P–T limits, the licensee requested in its submittal dated October 16, 2000, that the staff exempt DAEC from application of specific requirements of 10 CFR part 50, § 50.60(a) and 10 CFR part 50, Appendix G, and substitute use of ASME Code Case N–640. Code Case N–640 permits the use of an alternate reference fracture toughness (K_{Ic} fracture toughness curve instead of K_{Ia} fracture toughness curve) for reactor vessel materials in determining the P–T limits. The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for exemption contained in the October 16, 2000, submittal, and is needed to support the TS amendment request that is contained in the same submittal. The proposed amendment will revise the P–T limits for heatup, cooldown, and inservice test limitations for the reactor coolant system (RCS) to 25 and 32 effective full power years (EFPYs).

Code Case N–640

The licensee has proposed an exemption to allow use of ASME Code Case N–640 in conjunction with ASME Section XI, 10 CFR 50.60(a) and 10 CFR part 50, Appendix G, to determine that the P–T limits meet the underlying intent of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) regulations.

The proposed amendment to revise the P–T limits for DAEC relies in part on the requested exemption. These revised P–T limits have been developed using the K_{Ic} fracture toughness curve shown in ASME Section XI, Appendix A, Figure A–2200–1, in lieu of the K_{Ia} fracture toughness curve of ASME Section XI, Appendix G, Figure G–2210–1, as the lower bound for fracture toughness. The other margins involved with the ASME Section XI, Appendix G process of determining P–T limit curves remain unchanged.

Use of the K_{Ic} curve in determining the lower bound fracture toughness in the development of P–T operating limits curve is more technically correct than the K_{Ia} curve. The K_{Ic} curve appropriately implements the use of static initiation fracture toughness behavior to evaluate the controlled heatup and cooldown process of a reactor vessel. The licensee has determined that the use of the initial conservatism of the K_{Ia} curve when the curve was codified in 1974 was justified. This initial conservatism was necessary due to the limited knowledge of RPV materials. Since 1974, additional knowledge has been gained about RPV materials, which demonstrates that the lower bound on fracture toughness provided by the K_{Ia} curve is well beyond the margin of safety required to protect the public health and safety from potential RPV failure. In addition, P–T curves based on the K_{Ic} curve will enhance overall plant safety by opening the P–T operating window with the greatest safety benefit in the region of low temperature operations. The operating window through which the operator heats up and cools down the RCS is determined by the difference between the maximum allowable pressure determined by Appendix G of ASME Section XI, and the minimum required pressure for the reactor coolant pump seals adjusted for instrument uncertainties.

Since the RCS P–T operating window is defined by the P–T operating and test limit curves developed in accordance with the ASME Section XI, Appendix G procedure, continued operation of DAEC with these P–T curves without the relief provided by ASME Code Case N–640 may unnecessarily restrict the P–

T operating window, especially at low temperature conditions. The operating window becomes more restrictive with continued reactor vessel service. Implementation of the proposed P–T curves, as allowed by ASME Code Case N–640, does not significantly reduce the margin of safety. Thus, pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2)(ii), the underlying purpose of the regulation will continue to be served.

In summary, the ASME Section XI, Appendix G procedure was conservatively developed based on the level of knowledge existing in 1974 concerning RPV materials and the estimated effects of operation. Since 1974, the level of knowledge about these topics has been greatly expanded. The NRC staff concurs that this increased knowledge permits relaxation of the ASME Section XI, Appendix G requirements by application of ASME Code Case N–640, while maintaining, pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2)(ii), the underlying purpose of the ASME Code and the NRC regulations to ensure an acceptable margin of safety.

3.0 Discussion

Pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12, the Commission may, upon application by any interested person or upon its own initiative, grant exemptions from the requirements of 10 CFR part 50, when (1) the exemptions are authorized by law, will not present an undue risk to public health or safety, and are consistent with the common defense and security; and (2) when special circumstances are present. The staff accepts the licensee's determination that an exemption would be required to approve the use of Code Case N–640. The staff examined the licensee's rationale to support the exemption request and concurred that the use of the code case would also meet the underlying intent of these regulations. Based upon a consideration of the conservatism that is explicitly incorporated into the methodologies of 10 CFR part 50, Appendix G; Appendix G of the ASME Code; and regulatory guide (RG) 1.99, Revision 2, the staff concluded that application of the code case as described would provide an adequate margin of safety against brittle failure of the RPV. This is also consistent with the determination that the staff has reached for other licensees under similar conditions based on the same considerations. Therefore, the staff concludes that requesting the exemption under the special circumstances of 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2)(ii) is appropriate and that the methodology of Code Case N–640 may be used to revise the P–T limits for the DAEC RCS.

4.0 Conclusion

Accordingly, the Commission has determined that, pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12(a), the exemption is authorized by law, will not endanger life or property or common defense and security, and is, otherwise, in the public interest. Therefore, the Commission hereby grants NMC an exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR part 50, § 50.60(a) and 10 CFR part 50, Appendix G, for the DAEC.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.32, an environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact has been prepared and published in the **Federal Register** (66 FR 20692). Accordingly, based upon the environmental assessment, the Commission has determined that the granting of this exemption will not result in any significant effect on the quality of the human environment.

This exemption is effective upon issuance.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 27th day of April, 2001.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Cynthia A. Carpenter,

Acting Director, Division of Licensing Project Management, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 01–11277 Filed 5–3–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590–01–P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 40–8964]

Rio Algom Mining Corp.

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Final finding of no significant impact; Notice of opportunity for hearing.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) proposes to renew NRC Source Material License SUA–1548 to authorize the licensee, Rio Algom Mining Corporation (RAMC), to continue commercial operations of its in situ leach (ISL) Rio Algom Smith Ranch Uranium Recovery Project in Converse County, Wyoming. This license currently authorizes RAMC to receive, acquire, possess, and transfer uranium at the Rio Algom Smith Ranch Project, which is located approximately 17 miles (27 Kilometers) Northeast of Glenrock, Wyoming. An Environmental Assessment (EA) was performed by the NRC staff in support of its review of RAMC renewal request, in accordance with the requirements of 10 CFR part 51. The conclusion of the Environmental Assessment is a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the proposed licensing action.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. John H. Lusher, Fuel Cycle Licensing Branch, Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Mail Stop T8–A33, Washington, DC 20555. Telephone 301/415–7694.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

At the Rio Algom Smith Ranch Facility, ISL uranium recovery method involves: (1) The injection of native groundwater, with added sodium carbonate/bicarbonate and oxygen or hydrogen peroxide, into uranium-bearing orebody through injection wells; (2) the chemical mobilization of the uranium through oxidation and then complexation with the carbonate species; and (3) the extraction of the uranium-bearing solution from the subsurface through a pattern of pumping wells. The uranium is separated from the leach solution by conventional ion exchange methods in the processing facility. The resulting uranium-poor solution is recharged with carbonate and oxygen and returned to the leaching zone for additional uranium recovery. This cycle continues until the ore zone is depleted or recovery of uranium is no longer economically feasible.

The recovered uranium solution is processed further by using ammonia or hydrogen peroxide to precipitate the uranium into a slurry. The resulting slurry is thickened by gravity settling, and then washed and de-watered in a filter press to about 50 percent solids. The filter press solids (cake) are then dried in a natural gas heated oil vacuum dryer, to produce uranium oxide, which is commonly known as "yellowcake." The dried yellowcake is packaged in 55-gallon (208-liter) steel drums for storage and eventual shipment to a fuel processing facility.

RAMC conducts uranium recovery operations within designated areas (wellfield units) of the Rio Algom Smith Ranch site. These wellfield units consist of about 50 acres (20 hectars) in size. A number of well patterns are installed in each wellfield unit, with each pattern typically including four injection wells laid out in a roughly rectangular shape and one centrally-located pumping (production) well. Currently, RAMC is conducting uranium recovery operations in three wellfield units.

Summary of the Environmental Assessment

The NRC staff performed an appraisal of the environmental impacts associated with the continued operation of the Rio Algom Smith Ranch ISL facility, in accordance with 10 CFR part 51, Licensing and Regulatory Policy Procedures for Environmental Protection. In conducting its appraisal, the NRC staff considered the following information: (1) RAMC's license renewal application, as amended; (2) previous environmental evaluations of the RAMC facility; (3) RAMC's amendment request submitted subsequent to its renewal application, and NRC staff approval of such request; (4) data contained in required environmental monitoring reports; (5) results of NRC staff site visits and inspections of the RAMC facility; and (6) consultations with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Officer. The results of the staff's appraisal are documented in an Environmental Assessment. The safety aspects for the continued operation are discussed separately in a Safety Evaluation Report (SER).

The license renewal would authorize RAMC to continue operating the Rio Algom Smith Ranch ISL facility, such that the plant and satellite facilities throughput does not exceed a flow rate of 12,000 gallons (45,420 liters) per minute, exclusive of the flow involved in restoring the depleted wellfield units. Annual yellowcake production will not be authorized to exceed 3.5 million pounds (1,587,565 kilograms).

All conditions in the renewal license and commitments presented in the renewal application are subject to NRC inspection. Violation of the license may result in enforcement action.

Conclusions

The NRC staff has re-examined actual and potential impacts associated with continued commercial operation of the Rio Algom Smith Ranch ISL facility, and has determined that the renewal of Source Material License SUA–1548 will: (1) Be consistent with requirements of 10 CFR Part 40, (2) not be inimical to the public health and safety; and (3) not have long-term detrimental impacts on the environment. The following statements summarize the conclusions resulting from the staff's environmental assessment, and support the FONSI:

1. The proposed ground water monitoring program is sufficient to detect excursions (vertical and horizontal) of recovery solutions. Furthermore, aquifer testing and previous operations indicate that the production zone is adequately confined, thereby assuring hydrological control of recovery solutions;

2. Liquid process waste will be disposed in accordance with approved waste disposal options. Monitoring programs are in place to ensure appropriate operation of the deep disposal wells and to detect potential leakage from the evaporation ponds;

3. An acceptable environmental and effluent monitoring program is in place to monitor effluent releases and to detect if applicable regulatory limits are exceeded. Radiological effluents from facility operation have been and are expected to remain below the regulatory limits;

4. All radioactive waste generated by facility operations will be disposed offsite at a licensed 11e.(2) byproduct disposal site;

5. Groundwater impacted by recovery operations will be restored to baseline conditions on a wellfield unit average, as a primary goal. If baseline conditions cannot be reasonably achieved, the R&D operations have demonstrated that groundwater can be restored to applicable class-of-use standards; and

6. Because the staff has determined that there will be no significant impacts associated with approval of the license renewal, there can be no disproportionally high and adverse effects or impacts on minority and low-income populations. Consequently, further evaluation of Environmental Justice concerns, as outlined in Executive Order 12898 and NRC's Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards Policy and Procedures Letter 1–50, Revision 1, is not warranted.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action

The proposed action is to renew NRC Source Material License SUA–1548, for continued operation of the Rio Algom Smith Ranch ISL facility as requested by RAMC. Therefore, the principal alternatives available to NRC are to:

(1) Renew the license with such conditions as are considered necessary or appropriate to protect public health and safety and the environment; or

(2) Renew the license with such conditions as are considered necessary or appropriate to protect public health and safety and the environment, but not allow RAMC to expand its operations beyond those previously approved; or

(3) Deny the renewal of the license.

Based on its review, the NRC staff has concluded that the environmental impacts associated with the proposed action do not warrant either the limiting of RAMC's future operations or the denial of the license renewal. Additionally, in the SER prepared for this action, the staff has reviewed the licensee's proposed action with respect to the criteria for license issuance, specified in 10 CFR part 40, § 40.32, and has no basis for denial of the proposed action. Therefore, the staff considers that Alternative 1 is the appropriate alternative for selection.

Finding of No Significant Impact

The NRC staff has prepared an EA for the proposed renewal of NRC Source Material License SUA–1548, On the basis of this assessment, the NRC staff has concluded that the environmental impacts that may result from the proposed action would not be significant, and therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not warranted.

The EA and other documents related to this proposed action are available for public inspection and copying at the NRC Public Document Room, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852.

Notice of Opportunity for Hearing

The Commission hereby provides notice that this is a proceeding on an application for a licensing action falling within the scope of 10 CFR part 2, subpart L, "Informal Hearing Procedures for Adjudications in Materials and Operators Licensing Proceedings," of the Commission's Rules of Practice for Domestic Licensing Proceedings and Issuance of Orders. Pursuant to § 2.1205(a), any person whose interest may be affected by this proceeding may file a request for a hearing. In accordance with § 2.1205(d), a request for a hearing must be filed within thirty (30) days from the date of publication of this **Federal Register** notice. The request for a hearing must be filed with the Office of the Secretary either:

(1) By delivery to the Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff of the Office of the Secretary at One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852; or (2) By mail or telegram addressed to the Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, Attention: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff. In accordance with 10 CFR 2.1205(f), each request for a hearing must also be served, by delivering it personally or by mail to:

(1) The applicant, Rio Algom Mining Corporation, 6305 Waterford Blvd, Suite 325, Oklahoma City, OK 73118;

(2) The NRC staff, by delivery to the General Consel, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852, or

(3) By mail addressed to the Executive Director for Operations, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555.

In addition to meeting other applicable requirements of 10 CFR part 2 of the Commission's regulations, a request for a hearing filed by a person other than an applicant must describe in detail:

(1) The interest of the requestor in the proceeding;

(2) How that interest may be affected by the results of the proceeding, including the reasons why the requestor should be permitted a hearing, with particular reference to the factors set out in § 2.1205(h);

(3) The requestor's areas of concern about the licensing activity that is the subject matter of the proceeding; and

(4) The circumstances establishing that the request for a hearing is timely in accordance with § 2.1205(d).

Any hearing that is requested and granted will be held in accordance with the Commission's ''Informal Hearing Procedures for Adjudications in Materials and Operator Licensing Proceedings'' in 10 CFR part 2, subpart L.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 30th day of April 2001.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Daniel M. Gillen,

Acting Chief, Fuel Cycle Licensing Branch, Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards.

[FR Doc. 01–11278 Filed 5–3–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590–01–P

POSTAL RATE COMMISSION

Commission Briefing

AGENCY: Postal Rate Commission.

ACTION: Notice of commission briefing.

SUMMARY: The Commission's Office of the Consumer Advocate will host a briefing on two federal laws relating to electronic signatures: the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act and the Electronic Signature in Global and National Commerce Act. Mr. R. David Whitaker will give the briefing.

DATES: Thursday, May 24, 2001, at 10:30 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The briefing will be held in the Postal Rate Commission's hearing room, 1333 H St. NW., Suite 300, Washington, DC 20268–0001.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Stephen L.Sharfman, General Counsel, 202–789–6820.

Authority: 39 CFR 3002.7(a).

Dated: April 30, 2001.

Steven W. Williams,

Acting Secretary.

[FR Doc. 01–11200 Filed 5–3–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7710–FW–M

POSTAL RATE COMMISSION

Tour of Printing and Distribution Facilities

AGENCY: Postal Rate Commission.

ACTION: Notice of commission visit.

SUMMARY: In early May, Postal Rate Commissioners and staff will tour facilities of CTC Corp. and Quebecor Inc. (both in Chicago, IL) and the United Parcel Service (UPS) international air hub (in Louisville, KY). The Quebecor visit will include the logistics center, consolidation facility, and bindery.

DATES: The visit is scheduled as follows:

May 7 (p.m.): CTC Corp.
May 8 (a.m.): Quebecor Inc.
May 8 (p.m.): United Parcel Service

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Stephen L. Sharfman, General Counsel, Postal Rate Commission, Suite 300, 1333 H Street, NW., Washington, DC 20268–0001, 202–789–6820.

Dated: May 1, 2001.

Garry J. Sikora,

Acting Secretary.

[FR Doc. 01–11271 Filed 5–3–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7710–FW–M

PRESIDIO TRUST

Notice of Public Meeting

AGENCY: The Presidio Trust.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: In accordance with § 103(c)(6) of the Presidio Trust Act, 16 U.S.C. 460bb note, Title I of Public Law 104–333, 110 Stat. 4097, and in accordance with the Presidio Trust's bylaws, notice is hereby given that a public meeting of the Presidio Trust Board of Directors will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 23, 2001, at the Officers' Club, 50 Moraga Avenue, Presidio of San Francisco, California. The Presidio Trust was created by Congress in 1996 to manage approximately eighty percent of the former U.S. Army base known as the Presidio, in San Francisco, California.

The purposes of this meeting are to: (1) Receive staff reports regarding environmental remediation, wildlife at the Presidio, and historic building rehabilitation; (2) receive a staff report and take action regarding the Vegetation Management Program; and (3) receive public comment in accordance with the Trust's Public Outreach Policy.

Time: The meeting will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 23, 2001.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Officers' Club, 50 Moraga Avenue, Presidio of San Francisco.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Craig Middleton, Deputy Director for Operations and Governmental Affairs, the Presidio Trust, 34 Graham Street, P.O. Box 29052, San Francisco, California 94129–0052, Telephone: (415) 561–5300.

Dated: April 30, 2001.

Karen A. Cook,

General Counsel.

[FR Doc. 01–11222 Filed 5–3–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–4R–U

RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD

Proposed Collection; Comment Request

SUMMARY: In accordance with requirement of section 3506 (c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 which provides opportunity for public comment on new or revised data collections, the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) will publish periodic summaries of proposed data collections.

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed information collection is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information has practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the RRB's estimate of the burden of the collection of the information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden related to the collection of information on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Title and Purpose of Information Collection: Verification of Supplemental Annuity.

Under Section 2(b) of the Railroad Retirement Act (RRA), the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) pays supplemental annuities to qualified RRB employee annuitants. A supplemental annuity, which is computed according to section 3(e) of the RRA, can be paid at age 60 if the employee has at least 30 years of creditable railroad service or at age 65 if the employee had 25–29 years of railroad service. In addition to 25 years of service, a ''current connection'' with the railroad industry is required. Eligibility is further limited to